REMARKS

Claims 1 - 19 are currently pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 1, 4, 6, 13, and 16 are amended for the Examiner's consideration. The foregoing separate sheets marked as "Listing of Claims" shows all the claims in the application, with an indication of the current status of each.

It is also noted that the Examiner has acknowledged the claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 (a) - (d) or (f).

The specification has been carefully reviewed and corrections have been made to several paragraphs. These corrections have been provided to make grammatical and typographical revisions.

The specification has been objected to by the Examiner because of some inconsistencies between the text of the specification and the relevant figures. The Examiner has requested clarification of the correct operation of the claimed invention. The specification has been amended to correct the typographical errors in the specification that made the text inconsistent with the figure. Specifically, the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 16 has been amended as follows:

> "...the driver C of the function C to the first and ~~third~~ second AV apparatus 12 and ~~14~~ 13, respectively."

In addition, the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 9, has been amended as follows:

> "The second AV apparatus 13 transfers the drivers of the functions A and B to the ~~second~~ first and third AV apparatus 12 and 14, respectively."

As this makes the specification consistent with the relevant figures and with the intent and description in the rest of the specification, these amendments do not constitute new matter.

With respect to the information disclosure statements of 4/11/00 and 9/10/02, it is noted that the one document submitted on 4/11/00 is specifically discussed on page 3 of the application, and that the documents submitted on 9/10/02 were cited in a

foreign counterpart application. For the Examiner's convenience, heretowith are attached the English translation of the references.

Claims 4, 6 and 16 have been amended to make minor typographical revisions. Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to more clearly define the intent of the subject invention by highlighting the control of the various duplicated functions of the multiple AV apparatus using a single transmitted command from the managing apparatus. This amendment is supported in the specification on page 12 beginning at line 4 which recites,

> "...The first AV apparatus 12 is used for the function A. The second AV apparatus 13 is used for the function B...."

This describes the use of one apparatus to handle all the other apparatus for a particular function. Thus one command is issued per function to control the function that is duplicated in the other lower ranked devices. As this is supported in the specification, this amendment does not constitute new matter.

Claims 1 - 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi et al. (U.S.5,887,193). This rejection is traversed.

The claimed invention is providing a management capability for controlling the functions of multiple types of audio and video equipment connected together, for example, as in a home theater system. It is unusual for users to purchase all of the equipment at the same time and from the same manufacturer. This fact suggests that equipment types, manufacturers and versions are, therefore, not consistent or of the same type. As such, they all have different remote controls and methods for tuning on/off, play, rewind, change channel, volume control, etc. The claimed invention provides a means for making dissimilar equipment and the associated control signals compatible. The claimed invention does this by sharing the control function drivers of each of the various equipment. This allows the managing device to identify which control format with be the controlling signal type. This is not the same as the reference cited by the Examiner.

Takahashi (U.S. 5,887,193) is looking at transferring files from one device to another. For example, displaying digital camera photos via a television, or recording digital camera photos on a video tape recorder. Takahashi et al. is querying the various devices to determine file compatibility. That is, to determine if the destination device such as a video tape recorder, can accept digital photos. If the video tape recorder is an analog device then it may not accept the digital camera photos. If the Takahashi et al. system detects compatible file types, the communication connection is confirmed and a message is sent to the user to manually perform the intended operation. If the file types are not compatible, Takahashi et al. disconnects the device and sends a message to the user.

With regard to claim 1, the Examiner is equating the AV apparatus information of the claimed invention with the acceptable file types of Takahashi et al. The Examiner has cited Takahashi et al. col 27 lines 54 - col 28 lines 22 to demonstrate that the Takahashi et al information is the same as the claimed invention information. This is incorrect. The section in Takahashi et al. cited by the Examiner refers specifically to the file types to be transferred to the controller. This section of Takahashi et al. discusses Figure 51 which is a table of file formats per device. This is not the same as the AV apparatus information shown in the subject invention, Figure 2 as a control word to include AV apparatus ID, function, and rank. The two are not the same.

In column 26, line 24 - 27, which is cited by the Examiner, Takahashi et al. teaches the use of compatible file types,

"...the data input/output means inquires as to acceptable file type of the output delegate object of the device A..."

Furthermore, Takahashi et al. is connecting the controller, if the file formats are compatible, to multimedia devices. If compatible, the control and data files of the multimedia devices are transferred to the Takahashi et al. multimedia controller. The multimedia controller then allows the user to access the controls of the multimedia

device. That is, the front end of each multimedia device is transferred to the multimedia controller. The user can then control each device from the controller however, there is no 'master' control. If the user wants to access the same function for some or all of the devices, (e.g., turn off the devices) the user must access the front end of each device via the controller and perform the function separately for each connected device (e.g., turn them off in turn). This is in contrast to the claimed invention that allows the managing apparatus to determine which device is the ranking device for a particular function and then uses that protocol to perform the function on all connected AV apparatus. Therefore, in the claimed invention, the user need only press off once and all the associated devices are turned off.

With respect to claim 2, the claim specifically requires that the drivers be transferred from the AV devices,

> "...said AV apparatus transmits control drivers of the functions which are determined by said managing apparatus to each of said managing apparatus..."

This is contrary to the operation described by Takahashi et al. in column 2, lines 43 - 47 that reads,

> "...it is possible to transparently use multimedia devices in a common manner through a controller via a LAN **without** the need for special software such as application software or a device driver."

The claimed invention requires exactly the same thing that Takahashi specifically exclude. Therefore, the two cannot be the same implementation.

As to claim 3, the Examiner argues that Takahashi et al. is transferring the same information as for the claimed invention. This is not correct. As discussed above and in section cited by the Examiner (column 26, line 24 - column 29 line 21) Takahashi et al. is exchanging the entire control set of each device so that each device can be controlled at one location as well as the data files of the multimedia devices (e.g., the actual JPEG digital photos, etc.). There is no attempt by Takahashi et al. to have one set of controls perform the same function for each device. This capability

requires the common drivers to be exchanged as in the claimed invention and which is prohibited by Takahashi et al.

With regard to claim 4, the issuing of commands by Takahashi et al. requires the controller device to select each multimedia device in turn and send each device an instruction when manually initiated by the user. Takahashi describes this in Column 2, lines 30 - 42,

> "....The controller loads, when connected to an arbitrary peripheral device **selected from among** the plurality.....the controller outputs an instruction in accordance with a manipulation based on the manipulation picture displayed on the controller, and **controls the arbitrary peripheral device**."

Takahashi et al. controls one device at a time. This is contrary to the claimed invention that controls the duplicated functions across the connected AV apparatus by a single command as in the amended claim 1 which recites,

> "... so that control of said duplicated functions is handled by a single command issued from said managing apparatus."

As claim 4 depends from claim 1, claim 4 is subject to the limitations of claim 1 which clearly states that a single command is used for the multiple AV apparatus connected instead of **one command per connected device** as for Takahashi et al.

As for claim 5, this claim depends from claim 1 and is, therefore subject to the limitations of claim 1 which clearly states that a single command is used for the multiple AV apparatus connected instead of **one command per connected device** as for Takahashi et al.

With regard to claim 6, the claim specifically requires that the drivers be transferred from the AV devices,

> "...said AV apparatus selects the information processing apparatus having a highest rank function based upon rank information of the functions possessed by this AV apparatus to **transmit a control driver of said highest rank function** to said selected information processing apparatus."

This is contrary to the operation described by Takahashi et al. in column 2, lines 43 - 47 that reads,

> "...it is possible to transparently use multimedia devices in a common manner through a controller via a LAN **without** the need for special software such as application software or a device driver."

The claimed invention requires exactly the same thing that Takahashi specifically exclude. Therefore, the two cannot be the same implementation.

With regard to claims 7 - 12, these claims all depend from claim 1 and are, therefore subject to the same limitations of claim 1. As argued above for claim 1, the information transferred between the devices in the claimed invention is not the same as the information transferred by Takahashi et al. Furthermore, the claimed invention requires that a single command issued for controlling the duplicated functions across the various AV apparatus where Takahashi et al. requires a separate command be transmitted for each connected device. Thus, the two are not the same and do not provide the same capabilities.

As for claims 13 - 19, amended claim 13 includes the requirement that allows the managing apparatus to determine which AV apparatus is the ranking apparatus for a particular function and then uses that protocol to perform the function on all connected AV apparatus. As discussed above for claim 1, this is in contrast to Takahashi et al. that requires the user to access each device in turn and transmit the instruction to each device one at a time. Since claims 14 - 19 depend from claim 13, they are subject to the same limitation and as such are also unique with regard to Takahashi et al.

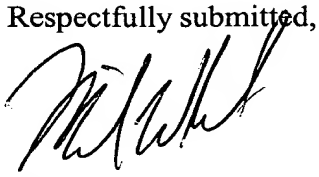
In view of the foregoing, it is requested that the application be reconsidered, that claims 1 - 19 be allowed, and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at 703-787-9400

(fax: 703-787-7557; email: mike@wcc-ip.com) to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

If an extension of time is required for this response to be considered as being timely filed, a conditional petition is hereby made for such extension of time. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-2041.

Respectfully submitted,



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